

R. D. W. Connor

BISHOP ATKINSON
AND
THE CHURCH IN THE CONFEDERACY

BY
The Rt. Rev. Jos. Blount Cheshire, D.D.
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THE RT. REV. THOS. ATKINSON, D.D., LL.D.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER
STONE OF THE BISHOP ATKINSON MEMORIAL CHURCH,
CHARLOTTE, N. C., AUGUST 6TH, 1909, BY THE RT. REV.
THE BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA.

Bishop Atkinson and the Church in the Confederacy.

The third Bishop of North Carolina occupied a somewhat unique position among our Southern Bishops in his attitude towards the difficult problems presented to the Church, both at the beginning and at the close of the war between the States. His position was not always understood, nor did his course at the time command universal approval. But it was his power of seeing clearly, and of reasoning accurately, amid the clouds and clamor of those perilous times, which, more than any other single influence, brought the Church in peace and unity and unfeigned charity through trials which otherwise might have split it into discordant and hostile communions. Having truth with him he dared to seem to stand alone; and all the more contentedly and patiently, because his love and confidence towards his brethren made him feel sure that the truth would in the end bring all together again in pursuit of their great and holy purpose.

It has long been my deliberate judgment that in his wonderful combination of spiritual elevation, moral earnestness, intellectual power, and sound judgment, Bishop Atkinson was the greatest man I have ever known. He was like a little child in purity of character, in perfect sincerity and unaffectedness. He did not condescend to the lowly, because his generous love and genuine sympathy saw all men on the level of a redeemed humanity. He was the kindest and most charming of companions, with a sweet and gentle humor, which insensibly reconciled and harmonized the possible discordances and incongruities of the most heterogeneous gathering; and yet there was ever about him an atmosphere of unaffected and unconscious goodness and purity, which seemed to make a base thought or an unlovely word unthinkable and unspeakable in his presence. As a preacher he perfectly illustrated that definition of eloquence which makes it consist in

convincing the mind and moving the heart, rather than in pleasing the taste; which makes the hearer say to himself "How true, and how just!" rather than "How beautiful" or "How eloquent!" Absorbed in the greatness of his message, and in the solemn responsibility of delivering it, he would have scorned the artificial graces of oratory, if he had thought at all about them. It never once entered his mind that he was preaching an eloquent sermon. I have never forgotten the impression made upon me when I was about fourteen years old, and had, with a familiarity which his affectionate treatment of me allowed, repeated to him what a rather shallow clergyman had said about the neglect of the cultivation of oratory by our clergy, as compared with some other ministers. Up to that time I had heard little preaching except that of my own father, and of the Bishop himself; and I had a rather high opinion of the quality of preaching in the Church. I confidently expected to hear the Bishop repel the suggestion that our clergy were in any respect behind those of our Christian brethren about us. He looked at me for a moment in silence, with his accustomed expression of serious benignity, and then said: "My son, oratory is the last thing I wish to see my clergy cultivate." I did not understand him then, but it seems to me now a speech most characteristic of the man, and of the preacher. To him the great things in preaching were so very great and absorbing that he never got down to the level of a cultivated and conscious oratory. And therein lay his excellence as a speaker, and that real eloquence where power of thought and earnestness of purpose are by the heat of unaffected love fused into a living word, which goes straight to the heart and mind with the irresistible force of an electric shock. To me he was the most impressive and convincing preacher I have ever listened to, and the most simple and unaffected in his method and in his manner.

I can not refrain from giving here two interesting experiences, told me by Bishop Atkinson himself, which I have

never seen in print, or heard from others. His first charge was in Norfolk, his second in Lynchburg. He had been born, baptized, and brought up, in the Church, as had his ancestors before him. He was of an old Virginia Church family, though several of his brothers and sisters became Presbyterians early in their life. In his youth the Church in Virginia, as in most other parts of the country, was but beginning to learn the significance and the value of her own standards of doctrine and of worship. The clergy had been so few, and so overburdened with the care of widely scattered congregations and individuals, that they had not been able to put into use the devotional methods of the Church; and many of her holy and edifying services had been neglected and forgotten. But the spirit was moving upon the dry bones, and clergy and people were beginning to understand, as well as to love, their spiritual mother, and more and more to recover their lost heritage, lost to use, but preserved for them in the Prayer Book.

The young rector at Lynchburg, in his diligent study of the Prayer Book, observing with renewed attention its various contents, began to think for the first time about the Collects, Epistles and Gospels for the Saints' Days, and other minor festivals. He had never seen them used, and he wondered why they were there, in the very midst of the book, and closely associated with those in common use. And then he began to feel that they must be there because the Church intended them for use. This seemed a strange and startling thought, but he could see no other explanation. He did not lack courage to act alone, but he had modesty and humility which made him fear to set himself up as wiser or better than his brethren. He felt that he must seek counsel.

It was in those days a long journey from Lynchburg to Petersburg, in the heavy stage coach, or by private conveyance, along the ill-made and worse-kept roads of mountain and of low country. But this question had to be settled; and so he took that journey to confer with a kindred spirit,

the Rev. Nicholas Cobbs, rector of St. Paul's Church, and afterwards the first Bishop of Alabama, a "Saint of the Southern Church," as he has justly been called. It came out in their conference that the same thoughts had been exercising the mind and conscience of good brother Cobbs; and he had come to the same conclusion. So, then and there, these two agreed that from that time on they would endeavor to observe the days and seasons of the Church's year, as they are set forth in the Prayer Book. And that, Bishop Atkinson said to me, was the beginning of the observance of these minor festivals in Virginia, so far as he knew and believed.

The second experience which he related to me brings us a little nearer to our subject. When the Diocese of Indiana, in 1843, came to elect its first Diocesan Bishop, the choice fell on the Rev. Thomas Atkinson, rector of St. Peter's Church, Baltimore. At this time he had been only seven years in the ministry, and had come in from the bar, without, I believe, the advantage of a course in a theological seminary. He promptly declined: his *Nolo Episcopari*, being the simple expression of his sense of his unpreparedness. The Diocese of Indiana then chose another for Bishop, who also declined. Thereupon Indiana in 1846 again called him. This was quite an extraordinary experience. I remember no similar case, except that of the diocese of Washington, and Bishop Brent. And even that was not quite the same, for Bishop Brent was already a tried man in the Episcopate, and a proved success.

This second election seemed to carry with it a strong presumption of a providential call to that work, and his mind was adjusting itself to what seemed an inevitable duty, when he received a letter from an old Lynchburg friend, who for some years had been living in Indiana. This friend had left Virginia because his intense dislike of slavery had made him unwilling any longer to live in contact with it. Bishop Atkinson himself had a strong sense of the disadvantages and evils of slavery, though he was also sensible of the diffi-

culty of finding any just and practicable means of abolishing it in the South. He had freed all his own slaves who wished to be freed and to go to the free States, and had kept only those who voluntarily chose to remain in the South. His old friend wrote expressing the pleasure he anticipated in seeing him Bishop of Indiana, and begged him to bring his family to his house, and to make his house his home there until he should have leisure to make his permanent arrangements. He then added that the Bishop must be prepared to live and work in a community where the feeling against slavery and slave owners was becoming so inflamed and bitter, that the writer of the letter as a Southern man, though opposed to slavery, found himself in a painful and embarrassing position.

This letter caused him to decline for a second time the call of Indiana. Little as he was attached to the institution of slavery, and thankful as he could have been to see it justly and peacefully abolished, he felt quite sure that, if in Indiana his friend could not live in comfort on account of the state of public feeling, he could not hope to be happy and contented in his work, since he would probably, as time went on, find himself more and more out of sympathy with his people on the great and absorbing question of the day.

In the year 1853 the Diocese of South Carolina was to elect a Bishop. There was a strong feeling in favor of electing the Rev. Dr. Atkinson. But rumors had reached that State as to his feeling about slavery, and prominent persons in that Diocese communicated with him, asking for an expression of his views on the subject. He replied promptly in effect that he felt slavery to be a disadvantage, though he could not see how to get rid of it. But he declared that if it came to a choice between slavery and the Union, he should say, let slavery go, and preserve the Union of the States. That is, as I remember, the substance of his reply. This letter, he said, prevented his being elected Bishop of South Carolina; and Bishop Davis was chosen. My old friend Gen.

Thomas F. Drayton, told me that he was a member of the South Carolina Diocesan Convention of 1853, and well remembered the letter of Bishop Atkinson, which was made known to the members of the Convention, he himself having seen and read it; and he said but for that letter Bishop Atkinson would certainly have been their choice for Bishop.

"So," Bishop Atkinson said to me, "I was not Bishop of Indiana, because I was not sufficiently opposed to slavery; and I was not Bishop of South Carolina, because I was not sufficiently in favor of it."

And that is an example of how he went, not with one party or with the other; but thought his own straight clear thought, and spoke out his own honest words, and acted upon his own solid convictions; modest and quiet and gentle, but absolutely fixed and immovable in loyalty to his own conscience and to his own judgment.

And so, throughout the trials and perplexities of war, and the overturning of established order, and the subversion of civil and ecclesiastical institutions and precedents, we find in him the same unperturbed spirit, the same serene, unruffled temper, the same clear thoughts, the same loyalty to well-considered principles, and the same safe and solid judgment. In the crisis produced by the secession of the Southern States and the outbreak of war, violently rending the country in twain, and separating the Southern Dioceses from those in the North, he seems to have stood alone among the Southern Bishops in his clear and accurate views as to the *status* of the Dioceses thus actually isolated. In that still more critical moment, after the war was at an end, he again stood alone in the policy which guided his Diocese.

The view of the other Southern Bishops came practically to this—that the secession of a State from the Union was *ipso facto* the separation of the Diocese from the Church in the United States; that, having ceased to be citizens of the United States, they could no longer as individuals or as Dioceses be connected with the Church in the United States,

but were at once separated from it, without any action of their own, and freed from the obligations of its Constitution and Canons. Bishop Atkinson denied this. While granting that the separation produced by civil and political action might justify, and even require, a separate organization for the Church in the South, he maintained that the mere action of the States could have no effect whatever *ipso facto* upon the unity of the Church; and consequently that, until the Southern Dioceses should as such take action, they were still part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. This position he put forth and argued with great force in his Convention addresses, at Morganton in 1861, and at Chapel Hill in 1862. In the latter of these he says:

“It is certain that the Diocese of North Carolina was, in the autumn of 1860, a part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and it is equally certain that that Church has done no act since to exscind it, nor has the Diocese by its own act withdrawn itself. If then it be not now a part of the same Church, it must have been cut off by virtue of the political change produced by the secession of the State. But could the State, by any political act, destroy the organization of the Church, and annul its Constitution and Canons, which were its bonds of union with the Church in the United States? If it be the Church of Jesus Christ, or a part of the Church of Jesus Christ (and which of its members will declare it not to be?), then the State can neither make nor unmake it, alter or amend it, directly or indirectly; for Jesus Christ said: “My kingdom is not of this world.” His Church, so far from being the creature of the State, or the subject of the State, or in the power of the State, like clay in the hands of the potter, to receive any shape the State may choose to give,—*His Church*, instead of being thus ductile and malleable, was planted in spite of the State, and grew up and flourished under the most vehement and obstinate assaults and opposition of the State. He, then, that proclaims that the Protestant Episcopal Church is changed

in its organization and laws by the mere act of the State, does, however little he may intend it, yet in effect declare that it may be a very respectable religious denomination, wealthy, refined, and orderly, but that it is no part of the Church of Christ; and does in effect advise all its members, if they desire to partake of the blessings of the Church of Christ, to come out of that Protestant Episcopal Society and go elsewhere for those blessings. I do not see, then, how any considerate man, who does believe in the authority and mission of the Church, can suppose that its organization has been broken up by the mere act of the State. * * *

"We do not lose our rights and interest, then, in that Church, by ceasing to be citizens of the United States, but only when we voluntarily withdraw from that Ecclesiastical organization and establish another for ourselves. This, I conceive, we had the right to do, even if the United States had not been divided; were there sufficient cause for it; and that division does itself furnish sufficient cause. In the meantime, according to my belief, until we form a new organization, the old continues to subsist. There is no interregnum of anarchy. We are not left weltering in chaos, without a Constitution, without any binding regulations for the consecration of Bishops, for the ordination of clergymen, for the enforcement of discipline, so that each man is free to do what is right in his own eyes. God forbid we should ever be in such a condition."

This view of the question was not popular in the South. Inflamed with all the passions engendered by civil strife, the members of the Church, being in large proportion leaders of public sentiment, and identified with the Southern cause, chafed at the idea of any connection with the invading enemy. Bishop Polk, of Louisiana, in an address to his Diocese, maintained in its fullest extent the view reprobated by Bishop Atkinson; and declared that by the secession of the State of Louisiana, *ipso facto*, the Diocese of Louisiana was separated from the Church in the United States, and stood iso-

lated, without organic connection with any other Church or Diocese. This frank and bold statement shocked many minds, but logically it differed but little, so far as I have been able to learn, from the position taken by most of the Southern Bishops. Bishop Elliott, of Georgia, declared that by the secession of the Southern States the Southern Bishops had ceased to be Bishops of the United States, apparently meaning that by necessary inference they had ceased to be Bishops of the Church in the United States. And this seemed to be the general attitude of the Southern Bishops, so far as I can make out.

As the state of the country did in fact make a separation, and a cessation of all ordinary intercourse and communication, and as Bishop Atkinson recognized the necessity of withdrawing from the Church in the United States, and forming an organization conterminous with the bounds of the Confederacy, the distinction between his position and that of other Southern Bishops may seem merely *doctrinaire*. But it shows how carefully and clearly he thought out his position, and how faithfully he stood by his convictions. And this clear-sightedness into essential principles gave him a courage in action, and gave him a moral weight, which was of vast moment in the end.

In the meantime his view was proved to be not merely *doctrinaire* by two occurrences, which subjected him for the time to serious misrepresentation and distress. Some time in 1861, after North Carolina had seceded, he received the canonical notice of the election of the Rev. Wm. Bacon Stevens, as Assistant Bishop of Pennsylvania. As the Diocese of North Carolina had as yet taken no action towards changing its relations with the Church of the United States, he felt it to be his duty to signify to the Presiding Bishop his canonical consent to this election. In March, 1862, still before any action by this Diocese, he was asked to take part in the consecration of his friend, the Rev. Richard H. Wilmer, as Bishop of Alabama. Dr. Wilmer could not be

consecrated in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Church in the United States; and the proposed Constitution of the Church in the Confederate States had not yet been ratified. Bishop Atkinson thought that the constitutionality and regularity of the transmission of the Episcopal Commission were of too much importance to be set aside merely to avoid a few months' delay. He therefore felt obliged to decline to take part in the consecration of a Bishop, which he regarded as unauthorized.

These two cases, first his concurrence in the election and consecration of a Northern Bishop, and then his refusal to approve or to participate in the consecration of a Southern Bishop, gave occasion for much misconception and misrepresentation of his position and feelings, and were a cause of much pain and annoyance to him. They afford, however, another example of his high loyalty to his convictions, and of the calm confidence with which he followed the conclusions of his judgment.

This embarrassing situation was ended, when on the 16th day of May, 1862, the Convention of the Diocese ratified the Constitution of the Church in the Confederate States, and North Carolina took its place among the Dioceses of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America.

In the meeting at Columbia, South Carolina, in October, 1861, in the proposed Constitution, the Rev. Richard Hines, an old North Carolina clergyman, then representing the Diocese of Tennessee, moved to substitute the words "Reformed Catholic" in the place of the words "Protestant Episcopal," in the name of the Church; and Bishops Atkinson, Otey and Green voted for the change. We may almost say that this was a North Carolina vote, as only one other vote besides these four was cast for it, and that by one who had been a clergyman of this Diocese; though our own clerical and lay representatives at Columbia voted in the negative.

During the continuance of the war Bishop Atkinson pur-

sued diligently the round of his administrative and pastoral duties; visiting his parishes and missions, comforting the bereaved and afflicted, preaching in the camps to the soldiers, and, after the death of the Rev. Dr. Drane, assuming the rectorship of St. James' Church, Wilmington, in addition to his other duties.

I wish I had space to give the prayers which from time to time he put forth to express the devout hopes and wants of his people under their sore burdens. In heart and mind he was at one with them in all their trials, sufferings, aspirations, hopes and sorrows. And through all he had his people and his Diocese with him. They appreciated his great qualities, and common sufferings increased their mutual confidence and love. His Diocese and his Convention felt safe in taking their stand upon the ground selected by their leader.

When the end came he had his share of the personal sufferings and outrage with which the invading and now victorious army emphasized their triumph. His own simple account is most characteristic. Speaking of the approach of General Sherman's army to Wadesboro, where he then resided with his family, he says: "I thought it right to remain, and not to leave my household exposed to outrage, and without any protection. I supposed, too, that my age and office would secure me against outrage. In this, it turned out that I was mistaken. I was robbed of property of considerable value, and that it might be accomplished more speedily and completely, a pistol was held at my head. While I do not affect to be indifferent, either to the outrage, or to the loss I have sustained, I felt at the time, and still feel, that it is a weighty counterbalancing consideration, that, partaking of the evils which the people of my charge have been called upon to undergo, I could the more truly and deeply sympathize with them in their sufferings." I have been told, I can not be sure whether by the Bishop himself, or by some other, that when the soldier held his cocked pistol at the Bishop's head, and commanded him to give him his watch, the Bishop calmly

but firmly refused to do so. The ruffian then reached down from his horse and seized the watch, and took it from him. He offered no resistance—to have done so would have been both useless and unseemly—but he would not for fear give up his property by his own act. He could be robbed, but he could not be intimidated.

I must endeavor very briefly to summarize the events of September and October, 1865; when, as all must now confess, Bishop Atkinson was the instrument in God's good providence, for reuniting the divided Church, and so healing the breach that not even a scar remains to show there was ever a wound. This was peculiarly the work of Bishop Atkinson, and of his Diocese under his guidance. His friend, and nephew by marriage, Bishop Lay, was in all things like-minded with him in this critical period; and together they represented the Southern Church at the General Convention of 1865 in Philadelphia. But Bishop Lay had no Diocese behind him, and his own case, with that of Bishop Wilmer, of Alabama, constituted one of the problems to be solved in order to effect a reunion. He had before the war been Missionary Bishop of the Southwest. During the war, by the Church in the Confederate States, he had been made Bishop of the new Diocese of Arkansas. He did not therefore occupy an assured position for mediating between the two parties.

And now that soundness of judgment and clear view into the true principles of Church polity, which Bishop Atkinson had showed in 1861, became manifest. Of all the Southern Bishops he was the least embarrassed or trammelled by the results of the war. Those who had maintained, in theory or in practice, that political separation, *ipso facto*, produced, nay *effected*, ecclesiastical division, had to face the correlative of that proposition—namely, that the restoration of civil union necessitated, if it did not *ipso facto* restore, ecclesiastical unity. He, on the contrary, had maintained, and had acted upon the principle, that political union or dis-

union did not of itself at all affect the Constitution or organization of the Church. Therefore, when the war ended, and the union of the States was assured, his position was no ways affected. His hands were free, and his mind was also free. He had no need to struggle to reconstruct his principles, or to cast about how he might save the remnants from the wreck. Party heat had not affected his judgment in 1861, and he came to the consideration of the situation in 1865, with the same calm mind and clear vision. He said to his people, in effect: The war is over. Bitter as is the confession—we have failed—and all the States are again united under the authority of the Federal Government. We acted for the best. We have no regrets, and we make no apologies. We formed the Church in the Confederate States, because we found it necessary to do so. We did not wait to ask permission from the Dioceses in the North. The emergency was, and is, the explanation and the justification of our course. Facing the present situation, and feeling, as we did in 1861, that we have the right to act freely, and are not controlled or constrained by the course of political events, we find that the interests of the Church, and consistency with our own principles and professions, require us to go back to the Church in the United States. We believe our sister Dioceses will follow us, but we must act upon our own convictions. We can not wait because others are so situated that they can not act with us at this moment. We can act at once, and we believe it is for the interests of all that we should act at once. And so North Carolina showed then, as perhaps she has at other times shown, that she can be prompt when the occasion calls for it, though sometimes she is slow.

In Christ Church, Raleigh, September 13, 1865, Bishop Atkinson met his Convention, and advised the election of deputies to attend the General Convention, which was to meet in Philadelphia just three weeks from that day. He had received kindly assurances of welcome from prominent Churchmen in the North. He knew that no other Southern

Diocese could be fully represented. He felt that it was of vast moment that the Southern Church should be represented, and he put this view of the subject before his Convention. His Convention trusted him, and they followed their leader. My friends, the greatest military critic who has written upon the war between the States, says that one great advantage the Southern soldier had over the Northern soldier in all the early campaigns of that war, was that *he trusted his leader*.

But it was not an easy thing to follow our great Bishop in that sad and critical year, 1865. We now see that it was well done: but our fathers could not see: they could only hope and believe. In that Convention the Bishop was opposed by some of the best and noblest men who have ever served at our altars or worshiped before them. They feared that the Bishop's desire for the unity of the Church was misleading his judgment. The strength of this feeling is indicated, I think, by the fact that when the Convention had voted to refer the Bishop's proposition to a special committee, the Rev. Alfred A. Watson, one of the best and truest men who ever sat in our Convention, moved "that this committee be appointed by election." The motion was rejected; and then the Bishop showed his quality by giving the mover the next to the highest place on the committee. When the Committee reported favorably upon the Bishop's proposition, the Rev. Mr. Watson brought in a minority report, and a small but earnest and able minority of the Convention seem to have supported him in opposing what they felt to be a hasty and undignified return. But the Convention stood very solidly by the Bishop, having in it some of the ablest men of the State; and the Reverend Doctors Mason, Cheshire, Hubbard, and Hodges, of the clergy, with the Hon. Wm. H. Battle, Mr. Richard H. Smith, Mr. Kemp P. Battle, and Col. Robt. Strange, of the laity, were elected deputies to the General Convention.

In my judgment that action of the Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina was the critical and decisive act by

which the happy course of our Church history after the war was determined. Bishop Atkinson could not have acted the part he did act, nor would his action have had the effect which it did have, but for the fact that he had his diocese with him in mind and heart, and also visibly represented in the House of Deputies, with its full quota of able and distinguished men whose names stood for something in Church and State. Great as he was in himself, it showed that he did not represent only himself, but that back of him there was in the Southern Church a great body of clergymen and laymen, loyal to the Church, and ready to face bravely present duty, in spite of the past, if they should meet the same loyalty and magnanimity in the Churchmen of the North.

And who shall doubt that the presence of Bishop Atkinson and Bishop Lay and those other Southern Churchmen, for Tennessee and Texas sent also partial delegations, called out that generous spirit with which the General Convention met them!

But, I say, it was not an easy thing which those men did who went to Philadelphia from this Diocese in October, 1865. They went with anxious hearts, and against the judgment of some of our best men. I well remember how my uncle, the late Governor Clark, of Edgecombe, one of the gentlest and most generous of men, went with my father to the railway station the morning he was leaving for Philadelphia, and begged him not to go. "At least wait," he said, "until the other Southern Dioceses can act with us." And in Petersburg, where my father stopped in passing with an old parishioner, the rector of St. Paul's Church called on him, and was politely humorous and sarcastic in suggesting the kind of reception he might find awaiting him. The way of the peacemaker is not always peaceful or pleasant. Our carnal mind loves a fight, and hates to give it up.

I have no time to repeat the story of the Convention of 1865, of how nobly and beautifully our brethren of the North responded to the confidence shown in them by those who had

come from the South to this meeting. It has often been told, and by none better or more authoritatively than by Bishop Lay, in his admirable memorial sermon preached before our Convention of 1881 in Christ Church, Raleigh.

There again came forth Bishop Atkinson's wonderful clarity of thought and accuracy and felicity of expression. "A word spoken in season, how good it is!" That Convention, coming at the end of a great war, had to thank God for the restoration of peace. It was a necessity of the situation. And they were Northern men; and most of them believed in their hearts that slavery had been a national disgrace and curse, and that secession was a crime against the life of the nation. Whatever we may think, let us be fair-minded and generous enough to see just how they looked at it. They were thankful for the destruction of all that system of labor and of politics which had gone down in the issues of the contest. And now when they come to have their thanksgiving they must find some terms in which without offense they may ask their Southern brethren to join. And after much labor and travail, and a generous effort to suppress their own feelings, in deference to their Southern brethren, they had managed to reduce all their joy and triumph to a simple expression of thanksgiving for the restoration of peace and unity under the restored national authority. Could more than this have been expected from ordinary mortals?

And then the great and good Southern Bishop, whom many of them loved and admired, and whom one of their own Dioceses had twice elected as its Bishop—he stood up and said, in his noble and gracious but uncompromising manner: We can not join you in such a thanksgiving, but we can join you in thanking God for the *restoration of peace to the country and unity to the Church.*

And they accepted his offer; and they gave thanks as he prescribed. I profess to you, my dear friends and brethren, that my admiration for the courage and wisdom and grace

of our great Bishop, is almost surpassed by my gratitude to God our Father for the magnanimity and Christian brotherliness which so nobly responded to his appeal. And was ever a more eloquent word spoken by a Bishop of the American Church?

As I think of him unmoved in his serene clearness of thought and purity of purpose amid all civil discords and party strife, and then equally calm, dignified, unfearing, while the ruffian soldier threatens his life, I am reminded of the words of the Latin poet:

“ Just, in high purpose fixed, this man nor breath
Malign of threatening people, nor the face
Of lawless force, from his firm mind may shake.”*

And then when I think of the divine faith and love which lay underneath all this firmness, and gave beauty to that life, and was in him an unfailing spring of inward peace and hope and refreshing, those familiar English lines seem to suggest themselves, as perfectly fulfilled and justified in his life and character:

“ Like some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on his head.”

RALEIGH, N. C., August 3, 1909.

* *Justum et tenacem propositi virum
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni,
Mente quatit solida.*

—Horace, Odes III 3.

SPECIAL PRAYERS SET FORTH FOR USE BY
BISHOP ATKINSON.

In the Spring of 1861.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, in Whose hands are the hearts of men and the issues of events, and Who hast graciously promised to hear the prayers of those who, in an humble spirit, and with true faith, call upon Thee; be pleased, we beseech Thee, favorably to look upon and bless the Governor of this Commonwealth, its General Assembly now in session, and the people over whom they are chosen to rule. Possess their minds with the spirit of wisdom and sound understanding, so that, in these days of trouble and perplexity, they may be able to perceive the right path, and steadfastly to walk therein. So enlighten, direct and strengthen them, we pray Thee, that they, being hindered neither by the fear of man, nor by the love of the praise of men, nor by malice, nor by ambition, nor by any other evil passion, but being mindful of Thy constant superintendence, of the awful Majesty of Thy righteousness and of the strict account they must hereafter give to Thee, may in counsel, word and deed, aim supremely at the fulfillment of their duty, at the promotion of Thy glory, and the advancement of the welfare of our country. And grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance, that Thy Church, and this whole people, may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for those who have gone forth to war in defense of their State and Country.

O Most Gracious Lord God, our Heavenly Father, we commend to Thy care and protection Thy servants, who in behalf of their families and their country have gone forth to meet the dangers of war. Direct and lead them in safety;

bless them in their efforts to protect and defend this land; preserve them from the violence of the sword and from sickness; from injurious accidents; from treachery and from surprise; from carelessness of duty, from confusion and fear; from mutiny and disorder, from evil living, and from forgetfulness of Thee. Enable them to return in safety and honor; that we being defended from those who would do us hurt, may rejoice in Thy mercies, and Thy Church give Thee thanks in Peace and Truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the People of the Confederate States.

O Lord, our God, Who rulest over all the Hosts of Heaven, and over all the nations of the earth, Thou hast power to cast down, or to raise up whomsoever Thou wilt, and to save by many or by few; and we now come to Thee to help and defend us in this time of danger and necessity. We acknowledge and lament, O God, the many grievous sins, by which we have justly provoked Thy wrath and indignation, and wert Thou extreme to mark iniquities, O Lord, we could not abide it. But it is Thy nature and property ever to have mercy and to forgive; and we beseech Thee now to extend to us Thine accustomed mercy, and to deliver us from the evils and dangers to which we are exposed. Do Thou, O Lord, remove from our borders all invading armies; confound the devices of such as would do us hurt, and send us speedily a just and honorable and lasting peace. And above every earthly blessing give us, as a people, grace to know, and love, and serve Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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